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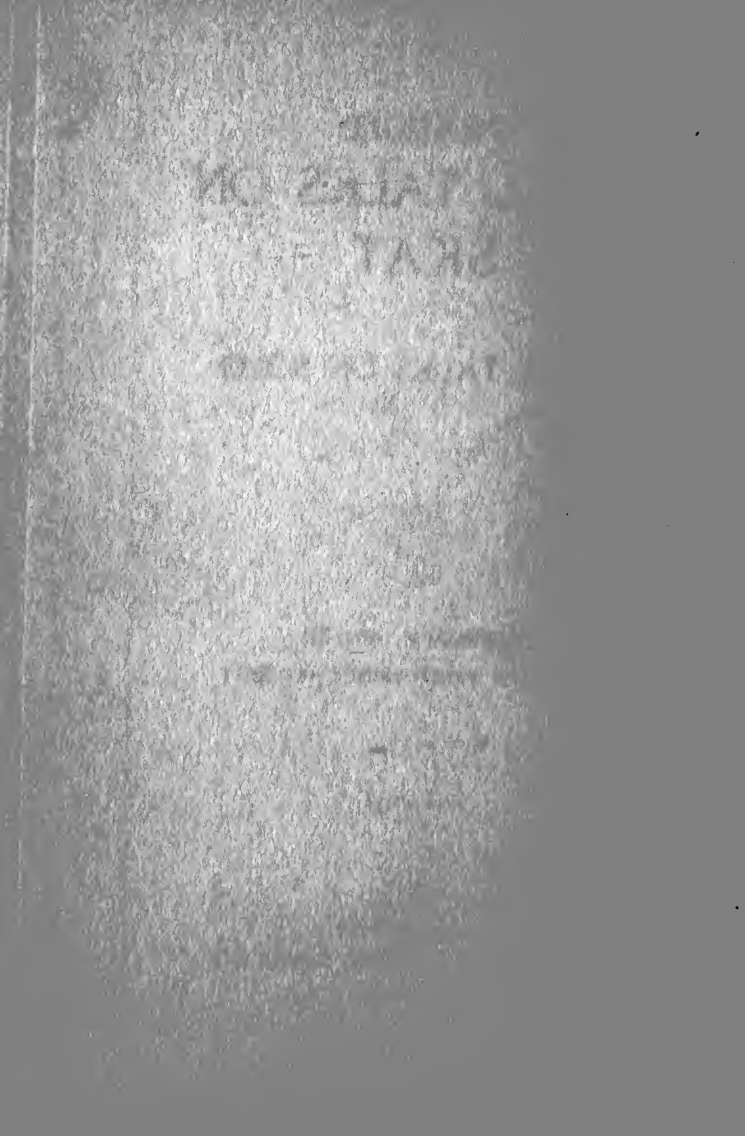
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ENLARGED
SMALL TALKS ON
SKAT

SMALL TALKS ON SOLO



VIRGINIA M. MEYER
TEACHER OF WHIST, BRIDGE AND SKAT

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To J. G. T. I owe my first interest in, and incentive to, the study of the fascinating game of Skat.

VIRGINIA M. MEYER.

NOTE

Skat has for years been the National Game of Germany and is fast becoming equally popular in all other countries. The game derives its name from an abbreviation of the Italian word Skatola, meaning box or a place of safe keeping. Skat was first played in the town of Altenburg, Germany, in or about the year 1815, but not until 1848 or 1850 did its popularity manifest itself. The first Skat Congress in America was held in St. Louis, Mo., on Jan. 22, 1898. On this date the North American Skat League had its birth and Skat Congresses have been held in the larger cities of the United States annually since that time.

Skat tournaments are largely attended, and it is estimated that there are over one hundred thousand players in America.

Lovers of Skat say its fascinations are greater than that of any other game.

It is a mistaken idea that Skat is a difficult game. The foundation is puzzling but when that is grasped the rest is easy.

It has been my good fortune to meet and play with some of the best Skat players in the country. A close analysis of the game, and *experience* that is one of the best (if not the kindest) of teachers, has convinced me that no game offers as great a scope for variety and interest. There is no sameness, one may hold a phenomenally good hand, and be outbidden by an equally poor one. No one resents this, as every game whether Scoring Games or Nullos, the play is most absorbing.

Give Skat a fair trial and the majority will join the ranks that claim it is the greatest of all card games.

For this book I claim brevity and conciseness. It will appeal to the beginner and to such it will give a desire to go more deeply into a close study of the Game.

VIRGINIA M. MEYER.

SMALL TALKS ON SKAT

THE SCHEME OF THE GAME

Skat may be played by three, four or five people. There are only three *active* players. If four engage in the game the dealer does not play. If five, the dealer and the player at his right, or second player from his right, do not play. The non-players score against the "*Player*." With the exception of the Nullo and Ramsch declarations all games are played on the same principle, the object being to capture 61 points (one more than half the total 120) cards of counting value to that amount, and *not tricks*, being taken into consideration. Failing in this, the "*Player*" loses the full amount of his game. If before, or after the *first card* is Played the "*Player*" thinks he cannot win his game, he can so announce, thus saving further possibility of loss by "*Schneider*" or "*Schwarz*."

VALUE OF THE CARDS

Each Ace counts.....	11
Each Ten counts.....	10
Each King counts.....	4
Each Queen counts	3
Each Jack counts.....	2
Making a total of.....	120

Thirty-two cards are used, running from the seven to the ace inclusive, each player having ten cards and two being used for the "*Skat*."

There are eleven trumps in each suit. The four Jacks, ranging in value: Club, Spade, Heart and Diamond, followed by the Ace, Ten, King, Queen, 9, 8, 7.

The cards are dealt, 3, 4, 3, giving 2 to the "*Skat*" after the first round of 3 to the players.

The cards in the "*Skat*" belong to the "Player" whether taken in the hand or left "*sleeping*." If the latter they are counted at the end of the game.

The players are known as the "*Player*" and the "*Opponents*."

The intricacies of the game are many and most interesting.

Experience alone will teach the fine points.

Valuation of the hands, quickness and accuracy of counting are the first things to be mastered.

The main thought for the beginner to grasp is that 61 points must be taken in the tricks.

Seven weak trumps with no outside scoring cards is a hand that is more than likely to be overthrown.

In calculating your hand consider what the possibilities are for having 61 points in your tricks *after* the game is played.

Remember, a hand with only *Tens high will not capture Aces*.

Think of the *winning* point cards you have—what they may capture, how many you *must* lose, and if the chances are above the average or *even*, you are justified in bidding for the Game.

While the four Jacks are the most valuable for winning tricks, and look alluring to the Skat novice, they have the *least counting value* after the hand is played.

The hand with two or three Aces and Tens is the one to consider "where will they be when the

play is finished?" If in *your* tricks do not be afraid to bid.

Short suits with Aces and Tens must catch Kings and Queens.

Long suits are apt to be trumped, as they also lose their value.

Remember that lone Tens lose their value unless they can be put "*to sleep*" in the *Skat*.

There are a few set rules for play that in the majority of cases win, but much judgment is needed as well.

MANNER OF BIDDING

Forehand—at dealer's left. He holds the bid until obliged to pass. Is *always* the Leader.

No matter how many are playing, the one next the dealer is always Forehand and Leader.

Middlehand—at the left of Forehand, has the *first bid*, and *holds the bid* if Forehand passes. It is the most *dangerous* position if he is the "*Player*," and a hand that could be easily won as Forehand will be lost as Middlehand.

Backhand—the player holding third hand, and bids *after* Middlehand, to the one *holding the bid*—the *best* position for Nullos, and not bad for Solos.

When four are playing the dealer takes no part in the game. The player at his right becoming Backhand.

The formula for bidding should be *correctly* followed. Middlehand bids to Forehand. Backhand then has the privilege of bidding to the successful one of the first two. The successful one of the *three*, names the game to be played.

Good Skat players are impatient with those who do not fully understand the *right* way of bidding,

and too much cannot be said as to learning it *correctly at once*.

Quite as many bids are overthrown as won. A hand that may seem invincible is often beaten. The beginner must not be discouraged.

"WITH" AND "WITHOUT"

The most puzzling part of Skat to the novice is "With" and "Without." It seems so senseless, and could one offer a reason *why* "*Without*" exists, it would be more easily grasped. It must be taken on faith, and soon it seems a matter of course, and no more thought need be given it.

Remember the Club Jack is the *best* Jack, no matter *what* the trump is, followed by the Spade, Heart and Diamond Jacks. This being the case it can readily be understood the desire to be "With" the Club Jack (the very best). The satisfaction must then be greater to be "With" two (the Club and Spade Jacks); add the Heart Jack and you are "With" three.

When you for the first time hold *all*, you feel with Monte Christo, "The World is Mine," for you are "With" four, and so on, as long as the sequence is *not broken*, you can add add one more "With," until a fine score is in sight.

The above the student good naturedly accepts; he sees *why* you score, for having so many good cards in your hand. The look of dismay, even of indignant disgust that greets one for the first time he presumes to say that the scoring is identically the same when "*Without*" as "With" makes one for a moment wonder how to meet this stumbling block, and wish it had never been put in the game. No one understands *why* you can count what is in the

other hands, with no way of capturing the High Jacks with Low ones.

Accept the fact that you can score "Something for Nothing" and you have "Crossed the Rubicon," are now ready to really learn.

The Club Jack controls the bidding. If you have only the Spade Jack it is "Without" one (the best). If Club and Spade Jacks are *both* missing, you are "Without" two. If only the Diamond Jack is in your hand, you are "Without" three.

To be "Without" four, and win your game is something worth working for, and you are *then* glad "Without" is part of the game.

The Jacks (or Matadores) are called Multipliers. The Basis Value of the same is 1 Multiplier; for every Jack you are "With" or "Without" you add one more Multiplier, always remembering the Jacks must be *in sequence* from the Club Jack.

The following illustrates a Heart Solo "With."

Heart Solo "With" 1 scores 20

Heart Solo "With" 2 scores 30

Heart Solo "With" 3 scores 40

Heart Solo "With" 4 scores 50

If the four Jacks are followed by the Ace, it is a Heart Solo "With" 5—60, and so on as long as the cards follow each other *in sequence*.

The following illustrates a Heart Solo "Without."

Heart Solo "Without" 1 scores 20

Heart Solo "Without" 2 scores 30

Heart Solo "Without" 3 scores 40

Heart Solo "Without" 4 scores 50

If the four Jacks are missing, also the Ace, it is a Heart Solo "Without" 5—60, and so on as long as the cards are *missing in sequence*.

In bidding your hand the Jacks take the value of the Game you expect to play.

In finding 61 points they count only for 2, therefore are the lowest scoring cards. Even though you have the Club Jack, Heart Jack and Diamond Jack you are only "With" 1, as the sequence is broken.

OVERBIDDING

In bidding "Without" get the bid as cheaply as possible, for if "Without" 4 you go to the full value of your hand and find one or more Jacks in the "*Skat*," you will have overbidden your hand. This, too, causes resentment, but the rule works both ways. Holding Spade, Heart and Diamond Jacks you are "Without" 1; 10! and behold the Club Jack in the "*Skat*" will make you "With" 4. Unless there is high bidding against you, beware of a hand "Without," as one or more Jacks are apt to be in the "*Skat*."

If you have bid 30 on a Club Solo "Without" 2, and find the Club Jack in the *Skat*, you have overbid your hand and must lose 36, as one *must* lose on a multiple of a Club Solo, or whatever game he is playing.

Remember the hand is valued relative to the Club Jack. If you have it you are "With," if you do not have it you are "Without."

MULTIPLIERS

All Contingencies are known as Multipliers. Each Game has a Basis Value known as the Original Multiplier. "With" or "Without" Jacks for each one in sequence; multiplies it 1 extra time.

Schneider, Schneider Announced, Schwarz Announced, multiply according to table given below:

LIST OF MULTIPLIERS

Basis Value of Game.....	1	times
For each "Wtih" or "Without" held in sequence counting from the Club Jack.....	1	"
Schneider (91 points)	1	"
Schneider Announced, announcing you will make 91 points	2	"
Schwarz, every trick.....	2	"
Schwarz Announced, announcing you will take every trick.....	4	"
Schwarz, after announcing Schneider.....	3	"

Schneider and Schwarz can only be announced in Solo Games. Guckser and Passt Nicht loses double. The "*Player*" must make 31 points or he is Schneidered.

ILLUSTRATED BIDDING

Middlehand always bids first, to Forehand. If Middlehand makes a bid, Forehand either holds it or passes. Backhand then bids or *raises* the bid to the one holding it, or passes. If Middlehand passes, Backhand has the first bid.

M.—"I pass."

B.—"I pass."

F.—"Names the Game, or Ramsch *must* be played.

M.—"I have 10."

F.—"I have 10."

M.—"I have 20."

F.—"20 is good."

B.—"I have 24."

M.—"24 is good."

Backhand is the "*Player*."

M.—"I have 20."

F.—“20 is good.”
 B.—“I have 24.”
 M.—“I have 24.”
 B.—“That is good.”
 Middlehand is the “*Player*.”
 M.—“I pass.”
 B.—“I have 20.”
 F.—“20 is good.”
 Backhand is the “*Player*.”

SUGGESTIONS

A hand that has 40 points or more, is likely to win. With the 40 you have, it will not be hard to win 20 more. A hand that has only 25 or 30 points is destined to lose.

Announce Game to the Scorer, as given below:
 “Heart Solo “With” 2 and Schneider 40.”
 “Heart Solo “With” 3, and Schneider Announced
 —60.”

GAMES

LIST AND VALUE OF GAMES

	D	H	S	G				
					Nullø.....			20
Tourné	5	6	7	8	Guckser Nullø (Lost 30)			15
	D	H	S	G	Null Ouvert.....			40
Solo.....	9	10	11	12	Guckser Null Ouvert (Lost 60)			30
Tourné Grand				12	Nullø Tourné.....			16
Guckser Grand.... (Lost 32)				16	Null Ouvert Tourné			32
Solo Grand.....				20	Ramsch..... (Lost)			20
Grand Ouvert				24	Ramsch Jungfer (Lost)			30

Tourné and Solo.—Naming the suit that is to be the trump.

Grand and Variations.—Only the four Jacks are trumps.

Nullos and Variations.—There are no trumps. Must not take a trick. Cards rank at usual face value, Ace, King, Queen, Jack, 10, 9, 8, 7.

Tourné.—D--5, H--6, S--7, C--8. An all around fair hand. Not strong enough in any one suit for Solo, and not enough scoring cards and Jacks for Grand. Usually has one or two Jacks, with some scoring cards, two or three suits that by favorable turning will give five trumps. The advantage of Tourné is in being able to put dangerous tens "to sleep" and to shorten suits.

Counting Rule.—With Jacks, Aces and Tens that will count 4.—R. F. Foster.

Tourné, when a Ramsch would be disastrous. Tourné is usually a Defensive Bid, made hoping to "hit" it. Also to avoid playing a dangerous Ramsch.

Solo.—D--9, H--10, S--11, C--12. To play Solo a hand must be fairly strong not only in trumps (of which you should have five or more) but outside tricks as well.

Counting Rule.—A hand that with five or more trumps and outside tricks will count to 8 is good for a Solo in almost any position.—R. F. Foster.

If it goes to 7 the chances are fair (unless you are in the middle).

Beware of Solos with three weak suits. A missing suit gives extra strength to a Solo.

The same principles govern the Tourné and Solo games with a few exceptions. In Tourné the

"*Player*" has had the opportunity to discard two cards, and is likely to have laid away 10's from your long Ace suits.

GENERAL HINTS

Lead your *long suit* when the "*Player*" is in the Middle.

Both he and your partner *must* be short and your partner *plays last*.

If the "*Player*" is at the end, lead your short suit. Your partner tries to win the trick, continues the suit, thus keeping the "*Player*" in the Middle.

Do *not* continue a suit when the "*Player*" is at the end and can trump or discard. Never allow him to get a discard if possible to avoid it.

In Solo Games *change your suits* often. Remember he is *long* in trumps, therefore *must* be short in the side suits.

If your partner leads an Ace, put on the *best* card you have.

If it is a 7 he will know you have *no more*. If an 8, 9 or other card, he must judge from cards in his hand and ones played how the cards are placed.

From two card suits open high, unless it be a guarded 10. Do *not* open that suit at all. Let it be led to you, if possible.

If *forced* to open it, open it with 10.

Lead a lone 10. It must go to the Ace in any event. If the "*Player*" wins it, it may make the King and Queen good in your partner's hand and allow you to *throw* in good scoring cards.

Should the "*Player*" lead a Black Jack, you holding a small card and a Red Jack should play it. It will inform your partner you are weak in trumps and he can better plan his game.

On inferior Jack led by the "*Player*" throw in a good scoring card hoping your partner can cover, or, holding no scoring card but a better Jack, *cover*, giving your partner a chance to throw in.

Always overtake your partner's trick (if it does not sacrifice your hand too much), if it will throw the "*Player*" in the *Middle*.

In Tourné Games it is not always wise to lead an Ace from a *long suit* through the "*Player*." He is likely to have discarded from that suit.

From a *long suit* headed by an Ace lead an intermediate card. If your partner has the 10, he can win it. If "*Player*" has it he will not *dare* play it.

You may catch it with Ace on the second round or your partner may be able to trump it on the third.

It is a poor plan for partners to false card. Give each other all the information you can. Two can use it to better advantage than one. Do not hold up your Aces in Solo Games.

Try not to sacrifice your partner's hand.

WHEN TO SMEAR WITH AN ACE

When you also have the 10.

From a *long suit* when there is danger of it being trumped.

A Lone Ace—You may be able to trump the 10.

When it will give you 61 *points*, or save being Schneidered.

Think *well before* Smearing with an Ace. Doing so may clear a suit in the "*Player's*" hand—just the thing he wants most.

RULES FOR THE "PLAYER"

TOURNE AND SOLO GAMES

In discarding weaken a suit so you can trump the winning cards of the opponents.

Discard good scoring cards unless they can be used to better advantage.

Do not discard a lone Ace.

Discard lone or poorly guarded Tens.

The "*Player*" should try to keep the lead, or throw it, so on the next round he will play last.

Avoid in every way becoming Middle Hand.

If in playing Tourné you turn a trump of which you have only *four*, with Ace or Ten of the suit, they are almost sure to be lost, therefore put them in the "*Skat*."

Unless the chances are greatly in your favor do not "*Passt Nicht*."

The loss is double.

If there is danger of being Schneidered, do not play the hand.

SOLO

Many Games are lost by the "*Player*" not leading trumps.

Exhaust the trumps that your good suit cards will not be trumped.

The "*Player*" has uphill work unless his hand is phenomenally strong, as he has two opponents to thwart him.

If all the trumps are exhausted except the *winning* one do not lead for it. Rather try to force it on good suit cards.

Some players advocate the lead of trumps *always* in Solo Games if for no other reason than to conceal the weakness of the hand.

It should depend on the hand entirely. If void in other suits and you have guarded tens to make, the lead should be thrown, perhaps by leading trumps or some other suit.

Holding only the best Jack, do not lead it unless very anxious to get out two rounds of trumps.

Do not lead away from Tenaces unless forced to do so. Lead low cards from trump suit if you hold the Ace and Ten. When cards *must* win against you let it be as quickly as possible. Always try to throw the lead to your left hand adversary. Do not give up the Club Jack too early, you may need it to control the game later on. Trump with your scoring cards, and lead your worthless one.

If forced to trump from five trumps it greatly weakens the hand for leading them.

Grand and Variations.—Only Jacks are trumps. The highest card of the suit wins unless trumped by a Jack. This can only be done if void of the suit led.

Counting Rule.—Any combination of Jacks and suits that will count 5 is a fair Grand.

2 Jacks—3 good suits.

3 Jacks—2 good suits.

4 Jacks—1 good suit.

A fairly safe Grand Bid is 3 or 4 Aces, and 2 or 3 tens, if the suits are short. If the suits are long they will be trumped with the Jacks.

TOURNÉ GRAND—12

This is an *accidental* Grand. Turning a Jack from the "*Skat*" after *Tourné* has been announced. allows the "*Player*" to change it into Grand.

Passt Niche Tourné Grand may also be played.

Sometimes turning a Jack will so strengthen a hand that with judicious discarding it will make a safe Grand.

GUCKSER GRAND

WON 16

LOST 32

The word "Guckser" means "*to peep*" or "*coax*" helping cards from the "*Skat*."

Usually one plays "*Guckser*" in order to *protect* or discard dangerous *Tens*, otherwise the hand is strong enough for Solo Grand.

Some hands look *almost* good enough for a Grand. If only we could discard or protect a lone 10. If only the suit were a little longer. It is then we play "Gukser." We fondly imagine "Skat" holds just the thing we most want.

To some this is the most fascinating feature of the game, and it is truly called a pitfall for the novice.

SOLO GRAND—20

A hand so strong in Jacks and suit cards that it is strong enough to play out of hand.

GRAND OUVERT—24

The highest bid in Skat. The hand is so strong the "*Player*" lays it on the table and defies his opponents to take a trick.

Necessarily the hand must be *very strong* and is *safest* for Forehand.

All Grands are played on the same principle.

GRAND

PLAY OF THE "PLAYER"

If Forehand, lead a Jack, hoping to get two for one.

With two Jacks., one Black, *not the best one*, lead the lower one. It *may* force the best one.

With two *Red Jacks* do not lead either.

Lead your suit cards trying to establish suits.

Do not lead from a long established suit *at once*. The opponents will only throw on worthless cards.

If some tricks *must* lose let it be early in the game while both opponents can follow suit, or later one can play high card and the other throw in high scoring cards.

Exhaust the Jacks as soon as possible. Lead your losing cards, while opponents have suit, if you have reentry cards *Then* play your long suit at the end of the game, when the high scoring cards *must* go to you.

This only applies to *established* suits, otherwise you *must establish it*.

PLAY OF THE OPPONENTS

Lead from your long suit. Do not leave a suit until it is established.

Do not be afraid to play out your high scoring cards. They must win or weaken the "*Players*" hand by forcing him to trump with a Jack. When your partner leads, put on the best card you have of the suit. Return the best you have.

Bear in mind to force the player. Do not hesitate to trump his good cards with your Jacks. If he does not lead Jacks, he either has them all, or does not want to lead them because he is weak.

Do not lead out your Aces too quickly in Grand.

Do not play Guckser Grand unless you have some weak point that you hope the "*Skat*" will protect. Grand from the hand does not expose your weakness, and Guckser loses double. These are two

good reasons for not becoming a victim of Guckser fever.

A lone Ten needs protection, or can be put to "*sleep*."

Do not discard a guarded Ten. It may save itself, also stop the opponent's suit.

NULLOS

Nullo is such a pleasing interloper in the game of Skat, that no one would willingly consent to be without it. To many players it is the most intense and exciting of all games played. To win or overthrow a Nullo is equally satisfying. Some players would sooner win an Open Nullo than an Open Grand. The word suggests itself: worthless. As soon as a trick is taken by the "*Player*" the game is lost. There are several variations of Nullo. Some are safe, some are risky. The more risky, the more one delights in playing it. The cards have their natural face value. There is only the Basis Value for Nullos, as Jacks have no scoring Value.

NULLO—20

Played from the hand. May have some weak points that you hope to overcome by being able to discard on other suits.

NULL OUVERT—40

Placed on the table before a card is led. To be played open. The "*Player*" not to win a trick.

NULL OUVERT FORGE'—60

The "*Player*" places his hand on the table and defies the opponents to force a trick on him, even after they have consulted as to how it might be done.

The above game is optional. It may be ruled out at the beginning of the game if the majority wish it.

GUCKSER NULLO

WON 15

LOST 30

A hand that with the help of the "*Skat*" might be worthless enough to play Nullo. Do not try it if you have more than two dangerous cards, as that is all the "*Skat*" will allow you to discard.

GUCKSER NULL OUVERT

WON 30

LOST 60

Played open, after taking the *Skat* cards. Do not play the above unless forced to do so to get the bid. It is dangerous, and the loss is too great.

NULLO TOURNÉ—16

An *accidental* Nullo. If after announcing Tourné the "*Player*" turns a card that will enable him to play Nullo he can do so.

NULL OUVERT TOURNÉ—32

If the second "*Skat*" card makes the hand a sure losing one, it can be played open.

SUGGESTIONS

FOR THE OPPONENTS IN NULLO GAMES

Never return the "*Player's*" lead.

Always return your partner's lead. He had some object in leading it.

With Ace and 7 lead the Ace, then the 7. Your partner can overtake it and continue the suit.

Continue a suit if your partner is discarding; he

may bare his hand of a suit and you may be able to overthrow the "*Player*."

Experience alone will teach the possibilities in the fascinating game of Nullo.

Never allow the "*Player*" to get a discard. Continue a suit if the "*Player*" follows. He is more than likely long in it. If you are also, it will allow your partner to discard high cards from other suits.

Try to overthrow the "*Player*" in the suits of which you hold the 7.

Try to keep the "*Player*" in the middle if you can, for he can then only underplay one card. If he is Backhand he can underplay two. Do not discard low cards. They are safe, and may overthrow the "*Player*."

The adversaries should give each other discards.

SUGGESTIONS

FOR THE "PLAYER" IN NULLO GAMES

The "*Player*" taking one trick loses the game.

Unless the "*Player*" has low cards in each suit so that he can "*duck*" any card led, the declaration is unsafe.

There is an exception—holding a singleton or two short suits the "*Player*" hopes he may discard them.

The "*Player*" holding a singleton 7, 8 or 9, should lead it.

As the "*Player*" can only have one lead, that must be an absolutely safe one.

Lead a lone 7 or 8 spot; from suit with both 7 and 9 lead the 9; if you lead the 7, it may be taken with a high card, and you may be forced to take the 8 with the 9.

RAMSCH

LOSES 20

RAMSCH JUNGFER

LOSES 30

Ramsch was introduced into the game as a punishment, for those who hold good hands and will not bid, in order to overthrow the "*Player*." It is better to lose a cheap Tourné than a Ramsch.

It is played after all have passed. Middlehand and Backhand not being able to bid, Forehand *may* name a Game or Ramsch *must* be played.

Played the same as Grand (only Jacks are trumps) except, the object is to lose, instead of gain the scoring cards.

There is more chance for good play than one would at first suppose.

Do not refuse to take a trick or two, early in the game.

You can take 39 points and still some player must have more.

Do not "duck" a trick unless you can do so twice. If you *must* win a trick at all in the suit, do it at once. Leave yourself with a low card to throw the lead later. If left with high cards at the end of the game one is more apt to have to take all the scoring cards that have been held up. Therefore keep one or two low cards to throw the lead toward the end of the game.

With only two cards of a suit lead the higher one first.

From a three-card suit usually lead the middle one.

Lead the Diamond Jack if you have it, as some one *must* have a better Jack.

The one winning the most points loses 20 from his score..

If one player does not have a trick the loss is 30 (for the loser) instead of 20.

If one player has all the tricks his loss is 50.

METHOD OF PLAYING

Forehand takes the "*Skat*" and discards two cards—the ones that seem the most dangerous.

Middlehand takes the two discarded by Forehand. Backhand takes the two discarded by Middlehand. Each will discard the cards most dangerous to his hand.

The player taking the last trick must take the "*Skat*" cards and they are added to his score.

This will influence Backhand's discard, if he is likely to take the last trick; he will not put high scoring cards in the "*Skat*," but take a chance on being able to discard them in play.

Each player is for himself.

If a Jack is led a Jack must be played if you have one.

ILLUSTRATED HANDS

One of the things to consider in bidding is your "Position."

A hand that would be a sure winner as Forehand, possibly Backhand, is almost impossible as Middlehand.

You are *between* your opponents. They at once discover your weakness and can attack you so mercilessly if you are in the "Middle."

BEST POSITIONS

For Grand—Forehand.

For Solo and Tourné—Forehand; possibly Backhand.

For Nullos—Backhand.

Favorable Backhand Position for Solo—when you have a missing suit, a guarded ten or a tenace. With such a hand you want the lead to come to you.

FOUR HANDS

TOURNÉ

C—J, 10, K, 9.

S—A, Qu, 8.

H—10, K.

D—10.

Hoping to turn a Club
or Spade.

C—J, Qu.

S—J, 10, 8.

H—10, Qu.

D—J, A, 9.

Any turn will help the
hand.

C—10, Qu, 9.

S—J.

H—10, K, 9.

D—A, 10, 8.

Hoping to turn a C, H,
or D.

C—A, 10.

S—J, A, 10.

H—K, 9, 8.

D—J, K, Qu.

Not strong enough for
Grand or Solo but too
good to pass.

Not one of the above hands is good enough for anything else.

If in turning for trump the turn is not favorable, and you still wish to try it, with an Ace or 10 of the trump suit that is likely to be lost, put it *'to sleep'* in the *"Skat."*

If there is danger of being Schneidered do not play the hand.

SOLOS

C—J, A, 10, Qu.

S—J, 9, 8.

H—A, K.

D—10, K.

Club Solo *with* 2.

C—A.

S—A.

H—J, 9.

D—A, 10, K, Qu, 9, 8.

Diamond Solo *without*
2.

C—J, A.

S—J, 9, 7.

H—J, 10, Qu, 8, 7.

D——.

C—A, 10, Qu, 9, 8, 7.

S—10, K.

H— —.

D—10, 9.

“Heart Solo *“With”* 3.” “Club Solo *“Without”* 4.”

Hands as good as the above, with 5 or more trumps and outside tricks or a missing suit are good Solo hands.

POSSIBLE TOURNÉ GRANDS AFTER TURNING A JACK

C—J, A, K.

S—A, Qu, 8.

H—10, K.

D—A, K.

C—A, 10.

S—10, K, Qu.

H—A, 9.

D—J, 10, K.

C—A, 10, 8.

S—10, K.

H—J, 9.

D—J, K, Qu.

C— —.

S—J, A, 10, 9.

H—10, K, Qu.

D—A, 10, 7.

If the card turned is a jack, the four hands given above are fair Grands, as a favorable discard can be made in each one.

GUCKSER GRANDS

C—J, 10.

S—J, A, K.

H—10, K, Qu.

D—J, 8.

Better for Guckser than
a Heart Solo.

C—J, A, 10.

S—10, K, Qu.

H—10.

D—J, A, K.

Good for Guckser if
Forehand.

C—A, K, 9, 8.

S—J, A, 9.

H—J, 10.

D—J, 10.

Good in any position.

C—J, A, 7.

S—J, A, 8.

H—10.

D—10, Qu, 9.

Good as Forehand.

It will be seen each of the above hands has a singleton 10. The "Skat" allows it to be discarded or it will protect it.

GRAND SOLO

C—J, A, 10, 9, 8.

S—J, A, K.

H—A.

D—K.

Good for Grand if Forehand. Club Solo in any other position.

C—J, A, 10.

S—A.

H—J, 10, K, 9.

D—A.

Good for Forehand. If any other position Heart Solo.

C—10, K.

S—J, A, 10.

H—J, A, K.

D—J, A.

Good in any position. Most favorable for Backhand.

C—J, A.

S—J, 10, 8, 7.

H—J.

D—J, A.

Good in any position.

GRAND OUVERTS

C—J, A, 10.

S—J, A, 10.

H—A, 10, K, 7.

D—

Good only for Forehand.

C—J, A, 10, K, 9.

S—J, A, 10, K, 9.

H—

D—

Good in any position.

C—J.

S—A, 10, K.

H—J, A, 10.

D—J, A, 10.

Good for any position.

C—J, A, 10, K.

S—J, A, 10.

H—J.

D—A, 10.

Good for any position.

NULLO

C—A, 10, 8, 7.

S—K, 9, 8, 7.

H—Qu, 7.

D—

Hoping to discard. Qu.
of Heart on a Dia-
mond.

C—A, 10, 9, 8.

S—K, Qu, 9, 8, 7.

H—

D—A.

Hoping to discard Dia-
mond Ace on a Heart.

C—K, 8, 7.

S—K, 9, 8, 7.

H—Qu, 9, 7.

D—

Hoping to be able to
discard K. Club and
Qu. Hearts.

C—8.

S—K, Qu, 9, 7.

H—10, 7.

D—9, 8, 7.

Not a good hand but
worth trying.

GUCKSER NULLO

C—K, 7.

S—A.

H—9, 8, 7.

D—A, 10, 9, 8.

C—K, Qu, 9, 7.

S—K, 8.

H—K, 7.

D—8, 7.

C—K, Qu, 9, 8, 7.

S—9, 8, 7.

H—K.

D—8.

C—A, 9, 8, 7.

S—A, 9, 8, 7.

H—K, Qu.

D—

Only one or two cards in the above hands look dangerous. The "*Skat*" may enable you to discard or further protect them.

NULL OUVERT

C—7.

S—9, 7.

H—K, 10, 9, 8, 7.

D—9, 8.

Looks invincible.

C—A, 10, 7.

S—Qu, 9, 8, 7.

H—9, 7.

D—7.

Dangerous if in the
Middle.

GUCKSER NULL OUVERT

C—A, 7.

S—Qu, J, 8, 7.

H—9, 8, 7.

D—7.

C—9, 8, 7.

S—9, 8, 7.

H—K, 8.

D—Qu, 8.

The above have dangerous points, but if forced to bid 30 would take chance on favorable cards in the "*Skat*."

NULL OUVERT FORCÉ—OR REVOLUTION

This is not played unless invincible as the Opponents may consult *how* to overthrow the "*Player*."

In some localities Guckser Null Onvert Forcé is played, taking the "*Skat*" cards to make the hand weaker. The loss is 120.

READY REFERENCE POINTS

The Jacks are the prime factors in the game, Club being the highest followed by Spades, Heart and Diamond. The cards in the "*Skat*" may make or mar a hand, if playing "Without" 2, 3 or 4. Should one happen to be in "*Skat*" it will lessen the value of the hand.

If playing "*With*," a Jack in the "*Skat*" is apt to enhance the value of the hand.

Try to keep the "*Player*" in the Middle.

Lead short suits to the "*Player*" when he is Back-hand.

Lead long suits through the "*Player*" when he is in the Middle.

The "*Player*" should in most cases *lead* trumps. Failure to do this has ruined many hands.

Trump with *scoring* cards and lead non-scoring cards.

A weak Solo is better than a doubtful Tourné, as there is less likelihood of turning the trump you may hope for if long in your hand.

Beware of Gucksters. They are a pitfall for the novice.

In Grand games show your weak suit by discarding from it, unless you wish to throw in a good scoring card or trying to guard a ten.

Opponents will lead from top of established suit, noting the card played by partner. He will throw the highest card he has of the suit or if void will "*Smear*."

Accustom yourself to count quickly the points in your hand; also that of the opponents.

Know how many points it will take to win the game; how many you can lose and still win.

This part of the game you can strengthen each time you play.

Do not be discouraged when game is overthrown. It happens as often as not.

Don't forget the main thing is to secure 61 points to win game and 91 to Schneider. Every trick must be won to Schwarz opponents.

Remember in Tourné and Guckser Games, the "*Player*" has no doubt discarded from the suit in which you are long, and is ready to trump your high scoring cards. Be backward about leading them. Lead low from that suit. If he is in the middle he will have to trump, as he will think the high cards are back of him.

In Solo, lead your Aces freely, as he has had no chance to discard. Change suits often, so he cannot discard.

Rules repeated several times are most important, therefore carefully follow them.

Do not *announce* Schneider if you can lose more than *one* trick and *that* card must *not* be an Ace or Ten, for enough points *could* be put on it to make 30 points.

It does not pay to risk winning *once* the value of the Play when there is danger of losing it ALL.

TWO-HAND SKAT

The players sit opposite each other.

The cards are dealt as if for three players, the dummy always being at the right of the Dealer. The Dealer has the first bid. The one holding the bid names the game. The non-dealer leads regardless of who is the "*Player*." After the first card is led the dummy hand is placed face upward and the non-"*Player*" plays the hand. Should the Dealer pass, and Forehand is not able to name the game, he may change his hand for that of the Dummy, but must then name a game to score 18 or more, or he must lose 18. If he names a game he then wins or loses the full amount of his hand.

PROGRESSIVE SKAT

Four players sit at each table.

Play four hands, and the two having high scores, move.

Each player has an individual score card.

Keep a plus and minus column.

At the time appointed for the close of the game each player will add his plus and minus columns, subtract the lesser from the greater, and the result will be his net score.

The player having the highest score wins. Should all the scores be minus, the one having the lowest minus wins.

(From the North American Skat League)

PASST NIGHT TOURNÉ

When a player turns one of the "*Skat*" cards and it does not suit him, he may so declare without showing it. He must then turn the other card which shall be trump. Should the second card turned be a Jack, the "*Player*" may either play the suit or grand tournee. The player is obliged to show the second card before he mixes it with his other cards, otherwise he is bound to play the game which his opponents select. The highest play called for must then be played by him. If won counts as tourné, if lost—counts double against the player.

RULES OF GAME

1. Cards must be dealt in the following order, viz.: Three-Skat-Four-Three. (See penalties.)
2. Cards must be cut by the player to the right of the dealer.
3. If all cards are dealt, the game must be played, even if the dealing was done out of turn; in such case the deal must be made by the one who should have dealt before, and then proceed as if no misdeal had been made, however, omitting the one who has dealt out of his turn, thus each player deals but once during one round.
4. Bids must be made in numbers, the value of which must occur in some possible game.
5. Plays or bids below ten points are not permitted.

6. In games in which the aid of the "*Skat*" is required, the "*Player*" must discard two cards. (See Penalties.)

7. "*Schneider*" or "*Schwarz*" cannot be announced in any game in which the aid of the "*Skat*" was required.

8. The "*Skat*" must not be looked at by any participant before the end of a game, except by the "*Player*" when playing a game with the aid of the "*Skat*." (See penalties.)

9. In case a card is served face up a new deal must be made.

10. The "*Player*" to be out of Schneider must have at least 31 points, and must have at least 61 points to win his game. The opponents need but 30 points to Schneider the "*Player*" and 60 points to defeat his game.

11. In all games that are played Ouvert, the "*Player*" must expose his cards and play openly, meaning that he lay his ten cards, face up, on the table for the observation of his opponents and playing thus from them.

12. If any player leads wrongly (plays out of his order) or neglects to follow suit, such error shall terminate the game and the same is to be considered as lost for the side having made the error. (See penalties.)

13. A player bidding ten or more must play some game the value of which amounts to the number of points bid by him; and in case he loses the game, he loses its full value.

14. Ramsch must be played when all participants have passed or failed to bid.

15. If a player has overbid his hand, the next

higher value of the respective game is counted and charged against the player. (See penalties.)

16. In case a player, having overbid his hand, plays his game and either of the opponents commits an error, the value of such game is credited to the "*Player*" and deducted or charged against the opponent who made the error. (See penalties.)

17. Examination of tricks taken or the counting of the points of such tricks (except the last trick made) shall terminate the play. (See penalties.)

18. Participants have the privilege to examine the last trick made. (This must be done however before the next card is played.)

19. All participants must keep their respective tricks in the order in which the cards were played, so that each trick in a game can be traced at the end of the game.

20. If a player has not heard or misunderstood the bidding of another player, and thereupon has turned one of the cards in the "*Skat*," the other player shall not be deprived of his rights, provided one or the other players corroborates his statement that he had not passed. The dealer shall then mix the two cards in the "*Skat*," the bidding shall be continued and the player bidding highest shall have the right of playing tourné or any other game.

21. If a player, when turning, accidentally sees both cards without having announced "*Passt nicht*," he shall be compelled to turn the top card and loses the right to play *Passt nicht*.

22. If, after the termination of a game and after the cards have been thrown together a difference of opinion arises as to which side has won the game, then it shall be the privilege of the player to announce the tricks he has made and what each of

them counted. If he does not succeed in convincing the opponents that he really had won the game, the value of same shall be deducted from his score as lost. The player should, in his own interest, see to it that the cards are not thrown together before it has been determined whether the game was won or lost.

23. The player has the privilege to throw his game after the first trick so as to save Schneider. He loses this privilege after two cards of the second trick are on the table.

PENALTIES

All Penalties in the Nature of Rules are to be considered as Rules

1. A dealer misdealing shall be charged with ten points and must deal again.* If in the course of a game it develops that cards had been misdealt, i. e. that one or more players either had too many or not enough cards, then the player loses the game if he did not have the right number of cards, even if the same thing occurred with one of the opponents. But if the player had the right number of cards and one or both of the opponents had too many or not enough, then the player wins, even if he would have lost the game otherwise. The dealer is not fined in this case. Each player should make sure before beginning the game, that he has 10 cards, neither more nor less, in his hand.

2. In games in which the aid of the "*Skat*" is required, the "*Player*" will be charged the full value of the game if he neglects to discard the proper number of cards.

3. If a dealer looks at either of the "*Skat*" cards

* Which said points shall be deducted from his total score at the end of a session.

before or during the progress of a game, he shall be charged 10 points.*

4. In case a participant examines either of the "*Skat*" cards (without right) before the termination of a game, such person shall be charged the full value of the game announced, but the opposing person or persons shall have the privilege of continuing the game for the purpose of increasing the value thereof by making Schneider.

5. If, before a game is announced, it is discovered that the "*Skat*" cards are missing or they, or any of them, are in the possession or have been seen by any participant, the dealer shall draw out of the hand of the person having the "*Skat*" cards, or any of them, sufficient cards to leave said player ten cards, after which the bidding shall proceed as if no mistake had been made, but the player causing this proceeding, shall be fined 25 points and is forbidden to participate in the bidding and denied the opportunity to play any game during this particular deal.*

6. A player mis-leading or neglecting to follow suit, loses the game, but any one of the participants has the privilege to have such error corrected and proceed with the game to its end for the purpose of increasing the player's loss. If then one of the opponents makes one of these errors the player wins his game, but its value is also charged against the opponent making the error.

7. If either of the opponents leads wrongly (plays out of order) or neglects to follow suit, such error shall terminate the game; in such case the game is won by the "*Player*," and its value charged against the opponent who made the error, but the "*Player*" has the privilege to have such error corrected and

* Which said points shall be deducted from his total score at the end of a session.

proceed with the game to its end, for the purpose of increasing the value of the game. If he then makes one of the errors mentioned himself, he loses the game, and the first error is fully condoned.

8. If, in playing Solo, the player has overbid his game and one of the opponents makes one of the errors mentioned, he wins the value of the game which he has bid and the same value shall be charged against the opponent making such error.

9. If, during the progress of a game, the "*Player*" places his remaining cards upon the table and declares his game won, but is found to have erred, he shall have lost his game, even if he might have obtained all the remaining tricks.

10. If, during the progress of a game, any one of the opponents places his cards upon the table, declaring thereby to have defeated the "*Player's*" game, all the remaining cards belong to the "*Player*" and the opponent who erred shall be charged with the full value of the game.

11. If a player declares his game lost and places all the remaining cards upon the table, such remaining or all cards belong to the opponents, and the player loses the full value of the game.

12. A player who examines the tricks taken (except the last made trick) or counts the points thereof, loses the game announced, but any one of the participants has the privilege to insist on the game proceeding to its end for the purpose of increasing the "*Player's*" loss.

13. If either of the opponenets commits the act last above mentioned, the "*Player*" can insist on proceeding with the game for the purpose of increasing its value. The full value of the game in such case shall be charged against the person committing this act.

14. If the "*Player*" or one of the opponents claims all remaining tricks and exposes his cards and it then develops that the other side could have made another trick, then all the remaining tricks go to the other side.

15. In all cases of errors, the points lost by the participants who erred, shall be of the same number as that which the "*Player*" wins.

16. Should the "*Player*" revoke, he loses the full value of his game. Should one of the opponents revoke, the "*Player*" wins his Game and the one making the revoke loses the full value of the Game. Either side may continue the Game if he thinks he can make Schneider or Schwarz. The dealer interested in the Game may call attention to a revoke.

GLOSSARY

Backhand—the player holding third hand—bids after Middlehand.

Bidding—Buying as at auction.

Contingencies—Jacks (or Matadores), Schneider and Schwarz.

Cross Ruff—Where each opponent can trump a suit.

Deal—The thirty-two cards.

Discard—Not being able to follow suit, and not wishing to trump, one throws away from some other suit.

Established Suit—One headed by Ace—10.

Forcé—Playing a card that to be won must be trumped.

Forehand—The one next the dealer.

Guckser—To peep, or "coax" cards from the "*Skat*" for Grands or Nullos.

Leading Through the "*Player*"—When he is on your left.

Leading Up to the "*Player*"—When he is on your right.

Matadores—The Jacks—Known as the fighting cards.

Middlehand—The second player from the dealer.

Opponents—The two who combine forces to beat the "*Player*."

Ouvert—Playing the hand open.

Plain Suits—Not trumps.

"*Player*"—The one who names the game.

Passt-Nicht—Turning the second "*Skat*" card loses double.

Revoke—Failing to follow suit when you can do so.

Ruff—Trumping a suit.

Singleton—Having only one of a suit.

"*Skat*"—The Game. Also the two cards in the "blind" or "*Skat*."

Smearing—Throwing in counting cards against the "*Player*."

Tenace—First and third best of a suit. Club Jack and Heart Jack are a tenace over the Spade Jack. Ace and King of a suit are a tenace over the 10.

"With"—All Jacks from the Club Jack in *Unbroken Sequence*.

"Without"—Failing in Jacks from the Club Jack, in *Unbroken Sequence*.

FINIS

In these simple first steps to the Great Game of "*Skat*" only the foundation in the most brief way has been touched.

Experience will teach the *fine points*.

BRIDGE NOTES

BRIDGE NOTES

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BRIDGE NOTES

SMALL TALKS ON
SOLO

SMALL TALKS ON SOLO

SCHEME OF THE GAME

Solo is played by three, four, or five people. Only three take an active part in the game. The silent players scoring with the opponents against the Maker.

Thirty-six cards are used, from the six to the Ace inclusive.

There are nine trumps in each suit. The cards rank in value: Ace, 10; King, Queen, Jack, 9, 8, 7, 6.

VALUE OF THE CARDS

Each Ace counts	11
Each Ten counts.....	10
Each King counts.....	4
Each Queen counts.....	3
Each Knave counts.....	2
Making a total of	120

The 9, 8, 7, 6, are called Voids, and have no scoring value.

The object of the game is to get 60 points or over; Tricks not being considered.

DIFFERENT GAMES

FROG.

SOLO.

SOLO BEST.

FROG

FROG.—From the German word Frage (pronounced Frahgah).

FROG.—Hearts are trumps. The Maker takes the "Blind" and discards three cards.

SOLO

SOLO.—Clubs, Spades, or Diamonds. A hand strong enough to name a trump without the help of the "Blind."

SOLO BEST

SOLO BEST.—Made Hearts from the hand, not taking the "Blind."

DEALING

When four play, the dealer sits out.

There is no mis-deal.

Each player has 11 cards.

They may be dealt one at a time, or 4-3-4, giving the "Blind" 3 any time except the first or last cards.

MANNER OF BIDDING

The one at the dealer's left may bid or pass. He may Frog, Solo, or Solo Best.

If he Frogs, the next player may Solo or solo Best.

If he Solos the next player may Solo Best.

If he Solo Best, he cuts out any other bid.

If first player passes, the second player may bid in the same way.

The third player can overbid unless the second player names Solo Best.

If all pass, the one next the dealer may Solo, pick

up the "Blind," show it to the other players, name the trump and discard three cards. If he loses, the loss is double. The above is optional and is decided upon before beginning to play.

FROGGING

The generally accepted way is not to show the "Blind."

METHOD OF SCORING

If each side makes 60 points, the game is a stand-off.

FROG—Each point over 60 counts.... 1

SOLO—Each point over 60 counts.... 2

SOLO BELT—Each point over 60 counts 3

If the Maker scores less than 60, the loss is adjusted in the same way.

RULES FOR PLAYING

If a player cannot follow suit, he must trump, even though his partner has already won the trick, whether by suit or trumping. If by trumping, he may over or undertrump as he pleases. It can readily be understood that suits may have the same value as trumps. They are valuable in the hand of the Maker, for with them he can exhaust the opponents' trumps by playing small suit cards, when he knows they have no more of the suit.

A long suit in the hands of the opponents may be made to ruin the Maker, for it can be led, and he must trump. As one twelfth of the cards are in the "Blind," it is reasonable to suppose that one will find some scoring cards.

It is hard to give any rules for bidding. Experience teaches one more than any set rules.

FROG

Heart Trump—With the help of the “Blind” with some Hearts, and some scoring cards that are likely to win.

The hand has an extra value with lone tens, as they may be discarded after taking up the “Blind.”

SOLO

Naming Spade, Club, or Diamond trump, without the help of the “Blind,” with a good suit and some scoring cards.

SOLO BEST

An all around good hand with Aces and Tens that are likely to be saved, or a long Heart suit and some outside scoring cards.

The main object is to make 60 points or over, naming the game that will be most likely to win, always aiming for the one counting the most.

RULES FOR THE MAKER

A missing suit is a dangerous element, as the opponents will lead low cards from it, exhausting your trumps, and then bring in their scoring cards.

If you have good trumps and outside suits, lead the trumps so that you may win your good suit cards.

If you have a long outside suit with Ace and 10, lead low from it. The opponents can make no scoring cards of great value and must soon trump. As each must trump if void of the suit it will soon leave you master of the game.

RULES FOR THE OPPONENTS

Be careful not to sacrifice your partner's hand, when the Maker plays after him.

Avoid opening a suit in which you have neither Ace nor Ten, as your partner's Ten may be at the mercy of the Maker's Ace. Keep away from that suit and let someone else open it. Short Suits are not good openings unless you want to use your trumps for trumping. Avoid opening a very long suit unless your partner plays after the Maker, as both will soon have to trump, for if the Maker plays after your partner it is sacrificing his hand. If the Maker is in the middle then open your long suit, for his hand is sacrificed to your partner.

In Solo Games, if the Maker is in the Middle, if Elder hand leads a Heart, it shows he has neither Ace nor 10 of that suit. If he leads a Diamond, he shows he has the Ace or 10 of Hearts. If he leads one of the black suits, he shows the Ace or 10 in both the red suits.

The element of being compelled to trump is a disagreeable one for both sides; and it is for that reason hard to make any set rules. Judgment must be used.

COUNTING.

Learn to count as you are winning tricks, so that at all times you will have an idea how many more points you may be able to win. Remember every point over 60 means a gain of 1, 2, or 3, according to the game played.

ILLUSTRATION FOR COUNTING

Suppose you have gained 90 points

30 over 60.

You will win from each player—for Frog..... 30
 You will win from each player—for Solo..... 60
 You will win from each player—for Solo Best.. 90

If you have made only 35 points, you pay each one of the others

Frog	25
Solo	50
Solo Best	75

If the score is written the Maker alone scores plus or minus. If he scores Plus 90, it naturally makes the other player Minus 90, but it is not scored.

A time limit is agreed upon, and the game then ends.

There are variations and some additional games that are played in different localities. These are as here given. If a player named a Game and is overbid by some other player, he may *again* bid on some Game of higher value.

ADDITIONAL GAMES

Misére.
Spread Misére.
Guarantee Solo.
Call Solo.

MISÉRE—COUNTS 20

The Maker cannot take a card that has a scoring value.

SPREAD MISÉRE—COUNTS 40

The Maker lays his hand face up on the table. He must not take a card of scoring value.

The general rules for Misére and Spread Misére, are the same as Null and Null Ouvert in "*Skat*."

Exception—The Maker may take tricks if they have no cards of scoring value.

GUARANTEE SOLO—COUNTS 40

The Maker guarantees that he will win 80 points (or over).

In a Guarantee Heart Solo, 74 points (instead of 80) will win the game.

CALL SOLO—COUNTS 100

The Maker must win every trick. He may call for any card he wishes and in exchange give any card he pleases from his own hand.

OPTIONAL RULE

If the card happens to be in the "Blind" he may call the card he wished to discard, the one named.

MISCELLANEOUS

In bidding a Misère outranks a Solo.

A Spread Misère outranks anything but a Call Solo.

In some clubs the silent player is paid if the Maker loses, but he does *not* pay if the Maker wins. In other clubs, he *pays* or *is* paid. This can be made an optional club rule.

SOLO NOTES

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